

5 December 1976

SOUTH OF SAN DIEGO UNION

Approved For Release 2004/10/28

CIA-RDP88-01314R000300010008-4

WRONGS HAVE BEEN CORRECTEDjournalist
Long under Bush

It's No Secret, CIA Has Turned The Corner

Question: Has the Central Intelligence Agency recovered from the Watergate-era revelations?

Answer: It has. Procedures are in effect to safeguard the rights of American citizens.

We have an active inspector general system, we are following the President's executive order, which was the first major reorganization of the intelligence system since 1947, and we are following the attorney general's guidelines to the letter.

We also report to seven oversight committees on Capitol Hill. For example, I have been in this job for close to 11 months and have made over 40 official appearances on the Hill.

The things that went wrong have been corrected and the intelligence community is again very strong. In terms of the restoration of credibility, we are on the way back. Morale is good and recruitment is up.

The corner has been turned.

In addition, there is today much less of an adversary relationship between the CIA and Congress, which in turn has resulted in some constructive thinking on how to strengthen the intelligence system.

Q: Do you think there should be fewer committees with CIA oversight responsibilities?

A: There should be just one, consolidated much like the joint House-Senate Atomic Energy Committee. There are now four House committees and three on the Senate side.

A consolidated oversight committee would minimize the risk of leaks. Consolidation also would result in more thorough oversight by having one fully informed and highly seasoned committee.

Q: Is there any need for specific legislation or new congressional rules to protect the security of CIA information? **A:** There is, but I am not optimistic about legislation getting passed.

Legislation in the field of secrecy can be carefully drawn to protect our sources and to safeguard the rights of citizens.

Existing law directs the head of the CIA to protect sources and methods of gathering intelligence. That needs to be clarified now that



"We see nothing that suggests the Soviet Union and China are on the verge of getting closer together."

the concept on which that directive is based has been eroded.

But the climate is such that legislation will not sail through the next Congress.

Q: Do you expect anymore horror stories involving the CIA to surface?

A: I hope not.

I keep reading allegations that the CIA withheld information on the Kennedy assassination, but to the best of my knowledge that is not true.

My instructions to the agency are to cooperate with congressional committees. When we see something that we think is even questionable we run over to the oversight committees, sprint down to the White House — and we keep people informed in accordance with the President's executive order. That is the continue.

QA

George Bush, director of the Central Intelligence Agency for the past 11 months, says "the things that went wrong have been corrected . . . the corner has been turned."

Bush, who will step down as director when Jimmy Carter takes office, also says procedures are in effect to "safeguard the rights of American citizens."

However, we can't control someone like Castro and his false allegations about the CIA. Fortunately enough people seem to question the credibility of Castro when he makes his charges.

Q: Should your successor be a CIA professional or a layman like yourself?

A: The overriding concern should be that he have the confidence of the President of the United States. That comes first. If he can be knowledgeable and professional in intelligence, so much the better.

But first he must have the total confidence of and access to the president.

And the intelligence he passes to the president must be unfiltered by policy constraints so that an intelligence community judgment can reach the president without regard to a program, say, in the Defense Department, without regard to a State Department foreign policy initiative.

In addition, the job is different now because there is more dealing with the public and Congress.

this calls for a professional or an outsider I really

continued

Approved For Release 2004/10/28

CIA-RDP88-01314R000300010008-4